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# SAILOR RETURNED TO U.S. IN SPY CASE

## Yeoman Accused With Father of Acting for Soviet Arrives Under Heavy Security

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, May 25 — A 22-year-old Navy yeoman accused of helping his father and others spy for the Soviet Union was returned to the United States today as investigators tried to assess whether national security was damaged by the purported espionage ring.

Under heavy security, the yeoman third class, Michael L. Walker, stepped off a Navy transport plane at Andrews Air Force Base near Washington and into the custody of several agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He showed no emotion as he was placed, handcuffed, into an unmarked F.B.I. car.

He has been charged with smuggling secret documents from the aircraft carrier Nimitz to his father, John A. Walker, a retired Navy communications officer. Yeoman Walker, who was arrested aboard the carrier in Israel, has provided investigators with "extensive" information about the conspiracy, according to a highly placed Government official.

### Security Damage Questioned

Navy officials say that Soviet agents would have found use for information gathered on the Nimitz by Mr. Walker, who apparently had access to trash containers where copies of secret documents were discarded for burning. But because of his relatively low security clearance, they said they doubted the information could have jeopardized national security.

The data accumulated by the elder Mr. Walker over his 20-year Navy career would have done much more damage, although not recently, they said. Mr. Walker, who oversaw top-secret information about the Navy fleet until his retirement from the military in 1976, has become the focus of the investigation.

Yeoman Walker was flown to the United States from Israel, where the Nimitz had been docked. Under normal procedures, he would be questioned by the F.B.I. and then jailed near Baltimore, where the criminal charges have been filed.

A bureau spokesman said the bureau would photograph and fingerprint Yeoman Walker at its Baltimore field office this afternoon.

As he stepped from the Navy jet, Yeoman Walker, wearing blue jeans and a white pullover, stared straight ahead. On the tarmac, he was surrounded by a swarm of bureau agents.

The destination of the five-car motorcade in which Yeoman Walker was taken from the airport was not announced.

### Father Arrested Last Week

His father, who had worked as a private detective in Norfolk, Va., was arrested last week after he left 129 classified documents at a secluded spot in rural Maryland, the bureau said. The documents, it said, detailed the movements of Soviet ships in the Mediterranean. Some of the papers had come from the Nimitz, the bureau said.

According to Reagan Administration sources, a Soviet diplomat who was near the so-called drop site at the time of the arrest was recalled to Moscow early in the week.

Yeoman Walker worked aboard the Nimitz as a clerk-typist in the ship's operations department, which oversees administration of the Nimitz. In that job, officials said, the yeoman was responsible for one of the trash containers, or "burn bags," where discarded documents were deposited before being destroyed.

Yeoman Walker was believed to have a "secret" clearance, meaning he could see only those documents that had been designated as "secret" or less important material marked "confidential." He should not have been able to see documents marked "top secret."

Under Navy procedures, no top-secret papers should have deposited in the "burn bag" Yeoman Walker was responsible for.

### 'Quite Sensitive Material'

Nevertheless, "He could have had access to quite sensitive and serious material," said Eugene J. Carroll, a retired rear admiral.

Among other things, Yeoman Walker would have seen information about the locations of Soviet submarines and warships, the Admiral said. The information would have been of value to the Soviet Union, he said, because it demonstrated the ability of the United States to track the Soviet fleet.

The Soviet Union could use that knowledge to develop strategies to outwit American reconnaissance methods, according to the admiral, who is deputy director of the Center for Defense Information. The center is often critical of the military.

"The operations department also controls all of the plans to execute nuclear attacks," he said. "If he had access to those plans, he might know lists of targets, lots of detailed information."

Government officials attempted to play down the value of the information that might have been gathered by the yeoman, saying that his relatively low security clearance would have prevented him from seeing critical intelligence documents.

A box bulging with 15 pounds of secret documents was found near his bunk last week, the F.B.I. said. Several large yellow bags were taken by an F.B.I. official from the Navy jet today, but bureau spokesman refused to say whether the bag contained any of the documents.

The bureau has said that it expects to arrest other associates of the elder Mr. Walker in the case.